

**STATEMENT OF
COMMISSIONER JESSICA ROSENWORCEL**

Re: *Expanding Access to Broadband and Encouraging Innovation through Establishment of an Air-Ground Mobile Broadband Secondary Service for Passengers Aboard Aircraft in the 14.0-14.5 GHz Band*, GN Docket No. 13-114.

Count me as someone who will acknowledge that being disconnected on a flight has benefits—like quiet time to read, uninterrupted by the dogged buzz of a smartphone. When I board an airplane, I still bring piles of paper to comb through and review. While my staff would never admit it, I am pretty sure they relish the time when I am up in the air and they can get work done without the usual blitz of e-mails from me.

But despite the benefits for my staff, in our hyperconnected age, we need and expect access to connectivity and content anytime and anywhere. The world simply does not wait for us to get off the plane. We expect information at our fingertips at all times. We expect to stay in touch with our loved ones, our jobs, and our communities wherever we go.

Air travel stands out as one of the few places where we can't always rely on a connection. Being cut off can mean we miss an important e-mail, critical news from home, or the chance to share a time-sensitive document. Although new broadband services are now on some aircraft, they are not ubiquitous. For frequent travelers, the routine of shutting off the wireless connections on our smartphones, tablets, and laptops when we board is all too familiar.

So I support today's rulemaking, which proposes to establish a new, terrestrial-based air-ground mobile broadband service in the 14.0-14.5 GHz band for passengers aboard aircraft. This system would use time-division duplex communications to provide a link between base stations and aircraft. Yet within each aircraft communications between passenger devices would be carried by short-range links like Wi-Fi. According to some, using 500 megahertz of spectrum in this band could sustain data rates to aircraft of up to 300 gigabits per second. Impressive. Although we can trust, we should also verify. So in the months ahead, as we gather a record in response to this proposal, I want to better understand these claims. In addition, I want to ensure that the proposed new service, which would be secondary to existing services in the band, will not cause harmful interference. We also must ensure that as we move forward we take steps to create a robust environment for competition in the provision of broadband services to passengers aboard aircraft. And if we are successful, my staff will get to hear from me more often.

Thank you to the International Bureau, the Wireless Telecommunications Bureau, and the Office of Engineering and Technology for your work on this issue.